

## **The Faithful Inherit the Wind and Everything Else**

### **The Book of Daniel**

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#### I. Daniel and the NT

- A. Jesus makes reference to Daniel (Matt. 24:15) acknowledging its place in the canon of inspired Scripture: “Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand).”
- B. Using Daniel as a prophetic clock
  - 1. The Magi (Matt. 2:1–12).
  - 2. The Anticipation of Simeon and Anna (Luke 2:25, 36–38).
- C. Allusions to Daniel in the Gospels
  - 1. Stone and Dust
    - a. “Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth” (Dan. 2:35).
    - b. “And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust” (Matt. 21:44).
  - 2. Coming on the clouds of heaven.

- a. “I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days” (Dan. 7:13).
  - b. “And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the land will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (Matt. 24:30; also see 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62, Luke 21:27; 22:69).
3. Desolation
- a. “Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined” (Dan. 9:26).
  - b. “Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!” (Matt. 23:38).
4. With the Many
- a. “And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate” (Dan. 9:27).
  - b. “And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins’” (Matt. 26:26–27).
5. Abomination

- a. “Forces from him will arise, desecrate the sanctuary fortress, and do away with the regular sacrifice. And they will set up the abomination of desolation” (Dan. 11:31; 12:11).
  - b. “Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand)” (Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14; Luke 21:20).
6. Handwriting
- a. “Then the hand was sent from Him and this inscription was written out” (Dan. 5:22–28; cf. Ex. 31:18).
  - b. “They were saying this, testing Him, so that they might have grounds for accusing Him. But Jesus stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground” (John 8:6, 8).

## II. Babylon in the NT

- A. “She who is in Babylon” (1 Pet. 5:13).
  - 1. Rome?
  - 2. Jerusalem? (Acts 8:1; 11:2–13; 15:7; Gal. 2:7–9; 1 Pet. 1:1)
- B. “Babylon the Great”: Rome or Jerusalem?
  - 1. Revelation 14:8 (Matt. 23:15).
  - 2. Revelation 16:19
  - 3. Revelation 17:1–6 (Ezek. 5–11).

## III. Prophetic Interpretive Approaches to Daniel

- A. The Anti-Papal (religious antichrist) Approach: This remains the position of some Seventh-Day Adventists, Protestant prophecy writers like Dave Hunt, and even some

Presbyterians who hold to a Historicist approach to the interpretation of prophecy,<sup>1</sup> especially when interpreting Revelation.

1. “The Protestant Reformers, in spite of their greatness, were to some extent cultural chauvinists who believed that the history of the human race after the cross focused on Europe, and that Daniel and Revelation were concerned were concerned to predict the history of Europe down to their day. They tended to identify the Papacy as everything bad in the Bible: the Little Horn of Daniel 7, the Abomination of Desolation, the Man of Sin, the Beast, the Great Whore, the Antichrist, etc.”<sup>2</sup>
2. In 1932, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) adopted “A Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod.” Statement 43, Of the Antichrist: “As to the Antichrist we teach that the prophecies of the Holy Scriptures concerning the Antichrist (2 Thess. 2:3–12; 1 John 2:18) have been fulfilled in the Pope of Rome and his dominion. All the features of the Antichrist as drawn in these prophecies, including the most abominable and horrible ones, for example, that the Antichrist ‘as God sitteth in the temple of God’ (2 Thess. 2:4).”
3. In Chapter 25 of the 1646 Westminster Confession of Faith, “Of the Church,” the following appears “There is no other head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ: nor can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof; but is that Antichrist, that man of sin and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the Church against Christ, and all that is called God” (25.6)

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<sup>1</sup>Samuel J. Cassels, *Christ and Antichrist or Jesus of Nazareth Proved to be the Messiah and the Papacy Proved to be the Antichrist* (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1846) and Christopher Hill, *Antichrist in Seventeenth-Century England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 1–40.

<sup>2</sup>James B. Jordan, *The Handwriting on the Wall: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Powder Springs, GA: American Vision, 2007), 3–4.

- a. “The Presbyterian Church in America received the same Confession and Catechisms as those that were adopted by the first American Presbyterian Assembly of 1789, with two minor exceptions, namely, the deletion of strictures against marrying one's wife's kindred (XXIV,4), and the reference to the Pope as the antichrist (XXV,6).”<sup>3</sup>
- b. In his commentary on the Westminster Confession of Faith, A.A. Hodge writes: “The word ‘Antichrist’ occurs in the New Testament in 1 John ii. 18, 22; iv. 3; 2 John 7. The coming of the ‘man of sin,’ the ‘son of perdition,’ is predicted in 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4. Interpreters have differed as to whether these phrases were intended to designate a personal opponent of the Lord, or principles and systems antagonistic to him and his cause. The authors of our Confession can hardly have intended to declare that each individual Pope of the long succession is the personal Antichrist, and they probably meant that the Papal system is in spirit, form, and effect, wholly antichristian, and that it marked a defection from apostolical Christianity foreseen and foretold in Scripture. All of which was true in their day, and is true in ours. We have need, however, to remember that as the forms of evil change, and the complications of the kingdom of Christ with that of Satan vary with the progress of events, ‘even now are there many Antichrists.’ 1 John ii. 18.”<sup>4</sup>
- c. Similar wording can be found in *The Savoy Declaration* of the Congregational Church, the *Baptist Confession* of 1689, and in the *Philadelphia Confession of*

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<sup>3</sup>[http://www.pcanet.org/general/cof\\_preface.htm](http://www.pcanet.org/general/cof_preface.htm)

<sup>4</sup><http://www.rtrc.net/documents/wcf/hodge/wcfaah25.htm>

*Faith.*

A. The Political Anti-Christ Myth Approach

1. With the decline of the Roman Catholic Church in the eighteenth century, “many commentators shifted to a futurist approach to prophecy. They continued to roll all the bad characters in the Bible [the Little Horn of Daniel 7, the Godless King of Daniel 11:36–45, and the ‘prince’ of Daniel 9:26] into one evil personage, this time not the Pope but some ‘Antichrist’ who would appear in the future just before Jesus returns.”<sup>5</sup>
2. This composite antichrist has been a political figure.
  - a. Caligula
  - b. Nero
  - c. Domitian
  - d. Valerian
  - e. Emperor Constantius II
  - f. Genseric the Vandal king
  - g. Huneric the Vandal king
  - h. Justinian
  - i. Napoleon Bonaparte
  - j. Benito Mussolini
  - i. In Oswald J. Smith’s 1926 book *Is the Antichrist at Hand?*, the front cover states the following: “The fact that this book has run swiftly into a number of large editions bears convincing testimony to its intrinsic worth. There are here

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<sup>5</sup>Jordan, *The Handwriting on the Wall*, 4.

portrayed startling indications of the approaching end of the present age from the spheres of demonology, politics and religion. No one can read this book without being impressed with the importance of the momentous days in which we are living.”

ii. John Warwick Montgomery writes that after Benito Mussolini’s death in 1945 “Smith himself tried to buy up all the remaining copies of the book to destroy them.”<sup>6</sup>

k. Adolf Hitler

l. King Juan Carlos I (born in Rome, Italy; one of his titles is “King of Jerusalem”; a descendant of numerous European leaders [Queen Victoria, Louis XIV of France, Emperor Charles V, etc.]).

m. Ronald (6) Wilson (6) Reagan (6)

## B. The Dispensational Approach

1. Follows the Antichrist Myth Approach with a twist
2. Claims that the Antichrist will appear after a so-called rapture of the church during a seven-year period that includes the “Great Tribulation.”
3. Hal Lindsey wrote in 1970 that he believed the antichrist was alive somewhere in the world. He repeated this belief in 1977 when wrote that it was his “personal opinion” that “he’s alive somewhere now. But he’s not going to become this awesome figure that we nickname the Antichrist until Satan possesses him, and I don’t believe that will occur until there is this ‘mortal world’ from which he’s raised up.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>John Warwick Montgomery, “Prophecy, Eschatology, and Apologetics,” *Looking into the Future: Evangelical Studies in eschatology*, ed. David W. Baker (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 366.

<sup>7</sup>“The Late Great Cosmic Countdown: Hal Lindsey on the Future,” *Eternity* (January 1977), 80.

4. Dave Hunt voiced a similar opinion in 1990: “Somewhere at this very moment, on planet Earth, the antichrist is almost certainly alive—biding his time, awaiting his cue.”<sup>8</sup>

#### C. The Covenant Historical Approach

1. Daniel is describing events that are unfolding in his lifetime.
2. There are no “historical parentheses.”
  - a. Feet and toes of Daniel 2: “At some point in this symbolism [of Nebuchadnezzar’s statue] an extended gap in time *must be fixed*, because by verse 44 the interpretation describes the future day of Christ’s millennial reign, as will be seen.”<sup>9</sup>
  - b. The 69<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel 9:24–27.
3. The focus of Daniel, like all prophecy, is on Jesus Christ (see Luke 24:27, 44).

#### IV. Five Points to Look for when Reading Daniel

- A. Sovereignty: Who’s in Charge?
- B. Representation: To Whom do I Report?
- C. Law: What are the Rules?
- D. Sanctions: What Happens When I Keep or Break the Rules?
- E. Legacy: Who Inherits?

#### Conclusion

“This is a historic time. It is in fact one of the great turning points in human history. I wonder if you here in peaceful America grasp the magnitude of the change we have

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<sup>8</sup>Dave Hunt, *Global Peace and the Rise of Antichrist* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1990).

<sup>9</sup>Leon J. Wood, *Daniel: A Study Guide Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1975), 39–40

experienced in Eastern Europe. Radical changes, however, are taking place not only in Eastern Europe, but also in the whole climate of the intellectual life of the world.

“It shouldn’t be necessary to speak about the importance of understanding the times, but let me remind you of that great insight that we find in 1 Chronicles 12:32 in the description of the 200 men of the tribe of Issachar “who understood the times” and because of that understanding of history, “were able to tell Israel what to do.”

“Let me illustrate the importance of understanding the times from my own experience. The communist disaster fell on my country [of Romania] when I was a teenager. For many years after that, my life was a battle for intellectual and spiritual survival under Marxist indoctrination and totalitarian and Christian terror. I struggled to understand the nature of that calamity, and the Lord gave me that understanding. In the forties, I wrote papers on the nature of the failure of communism. One of them, published under the title *The Christian Manifesto* landed me in six months of house arrest with harsh interrogations by the secret police. But for me the crucial moment came in 1977, when a friend of mine challenged me to set up an organization that would openly expose communism.

“Here is what I told him: ‘Communism is an experiment that has failed. It wasn’t able to fulfill any of its many promises and nobody believes in it any more. Because of this, it will one day collapse on its own. Now, why should I fight something that is finished? I believe that our task is a different one. When communism collapses, somebody has to be there to rebuild society! I believe our job

as Christian teachers is to train leaders so that they will be ready and capable to rebuild our society on a Christian basis.’

“To my surprise, here is what my friend said to me: ‘Josef, you are wrong. Communism will triumph all over the world, because this is the movement of the Antichrist. And when the communists take over in the United States, they will have no restraining force left. They will then kill all the Christians. We have only one job to do: to alert the world and make ready to die.’

“A few years later my friend was forced to leave Romania. He came to the U.S. and settled down. Then I was forced into exile, and I moved to the U.S. as well. Since then, my friend has not done anything for Romania. He simply waited for the final triumph of communism and the annihilation of Christianity.

“On the other hand, when I came here in 1981, I started a training program for Christian leaders in Romania. We translated Christian textbooks and smuggled them into Romania. With our partners in the organization, The Biblical Education by Extension (BEE), we trained about 1200 people all over Romania. Today, those people who were trained in that underground operation are the leaders in churches, in evangelical denominations, and in key Christian ministries.

“You see, the way you look to the future determines your planning and your actions. It is the way you understand the times that determines what you are going to do.”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Excerpted from Josef Tson “The Cornerstone at the Crossroads,” *Wheaton Alumni* (August/September 1991).